

Greetings

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**Bavarian Ministry of Economic Affairs, Infrastructure,
Transportation and Technology**

Kick-off meeting „HerO“

June 30th 2008

in Regensburg (Historic Salt Barn)

Gliederung

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I. Congratulations

Dear Mr. Sedlmeier,

Dear partners from the HerO-network,

Ladies and gentlemen!

Today my congratulations go to the participants of the HerO-network, and especially the city of Regensburg as its lead-partner, for their success in the selection procedure. Being finally chosen to participate in the URBACT II program and the “Regions for economic change” initiative of the European Commission makes up for the great effort necessary to succeed in such a tender.

II. HerO network

The objective of the HerO network is to promote the development of sustainable strategies for historical cities. These strategies need to incorporate solutions for mayor problems such as globalization, climate change, demographic change and mass tourism.

With regard to the partners, it is my strong belief that the network has a solid basis to achieve

these ambitious goals:

Participants include:

- Cities from 10.000 to 1.000.000 inhabitants
- Cities coming from both, the so called “old” and “new” member states
- Cities from both, the “convergence” and “regional competitiveness and employment” objectives
- Cities that are the administrative centers of their surroundings and member state capitals.

This variety and thus the combined far-reaching experiences of the partners are going to contribute to the success of the network. The shared common basis is concern on the cultural heritage of your cities and its sustainable development.

Certainly, all of us would like to live in places that are at the same time vital, attractive, and economically strong.

The HerO network can be expected to deliver vital impulses to all partners to succeed in future challenges.

III. Regensburg

Regensburg as your lead-partner already incorporates this.

Being admitted to the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2006 gave impressive proof of this. The very location of today's meeting is a great example for a historic site put to new use: the so called Salzstadel – the historic salt barn – is almost 400 years old.

However, Regensburg is at the same time an attractive up-to-date center for industry, services and science. Its development is impressive both in comparison to Germany and Bavaria, for example with regard to the rising number of residents, jobs created or GDP [gross domestic product] development. And: The Bavarian Government strongly supports this development.

IV. The role of the Managing Authority

As head of the Bavarian ERDF-Managing Authority I am delighted to participate in today's meeting. Close partnership with managing authorities for regional programs was one out of many reasons

considered by the European Commission when admitting the HerO network to “Regions for Economic change”.

From our side, close cooperation with the network was self-evident from the beginning. Let me just name the two most important reasons for that:

1. The network will lead to intensified dialog between network-partners, regional program managing authorities, and the European Commission. This will result in a better understanding of the respective challenges for everyone.
2. From my point of view, it is safe to assume that examples of best-practice from this network will find their way into mainstream regional programs, either during the current program-period or from 2014 on. So, it is rather obvious to gather experience on the developments at first hand and right from the beginning. The network offers a perfect opportunity to do just this.

V. Outlook

To all the participants, I would like to express my best wishes for a successful kick-off meeting.

I am convinced that you will all put many inspiring ideas into action or - as Mr. Grepmeier has written in the invitation - you will succeed in “developing a common spirit for the future of the network.”

What better place to develop such a spirit than this wonderful city of Regensburg?

As the head of the Bavarian ERDF-Managing Authority, let me assure you once more that we will continue to keep our close working-relation with the network in the future.